



Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation  
550 17th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20429-9990

Financial Institution Letter  
FIL-49-2018  
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## Interagency Statement Clarifying the Role of Supervisory Guidance

**Summary:** The FDIC, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and the National Credit Union Administration (the agencies) jointly have issued a statement to explain the role of supervisory guidance and to describe the agencies' approach to supervisory guidance.

**Statement of Applicability to Institutions with Total Assets under \$1 Billion:** This Financial Institution Letter applies to all FDIC-supervised financial institutions.

### Suggested Distribution:

FDIC-Supervised Institutions

### Suggested Routing:

Board of Directors  
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### Attachment:

[Interagency Statement on the Role of Supervisory Guidance](#)

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### Note:

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### Highlights:

- The purpose of supervisory guidance is to articulate the agencies' general views regarding appropriate practices for a given subject area.
- The agencies issue various types of supervisory guidance to their respective supervised institutions, including; interagency statements, advisories, bulletins, policy statements, questions and answers, and frequently asked questions.
- A statute or regulation has the force and effect of law. Unlike a statute or regulation, supervisory guidance does not have the force and effect of law, and the agencies do not take enforcement actions based on supervisory guidance.
- Supervised institutions at times request supervisory guidance, and such guidance is important to provide insight to the industry, as well as supervisory staff, in a transparent way that helps to ensure consistency in the supervisory approach.
- Agencies intend to limit the use of numerical thresholds in describing expectations in supervisory guidance, and clarify that they are exemplary only and not suggestive of requirements.
- Agencies will not criticize institutions for a "violation" of supervisory guidance.
- Agencies may continue to seek public comment on supervisory guidance to gather information, improve understanding of issues, or seek ways to achieve supervisory objectives most effectively and with least burden on institutions.
- Agencies will seek to reduce the issuance of multiple guidance documents on the same topic.
- Agencies will continue efforts to be clear in communications regarding guidance and to encourage questions from supervised institutions.